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Security Council
Sixty-fifth year

Letter dated 22 January 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Chad to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith, on behalf of the current Chairman of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, the report of the Committee's twenty-ninth ministerial meeting, held from 9 to 13 November 2009 in N'Djamena, Republic of Chad (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 97 (e), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ahmad **Allam-mi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 22 January 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Chad to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Report of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

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A. Introduction

1. The twenty-ninth ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa was held in N'Djamena, Republic of Chad, from 9 to 13 November 2009.

2. The following member States participated in the meeting: the Republic of Angola, the Republic of Burundi, the Republic of Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Gabonese Republic, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, the Republic of Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe and the Republic of Chad.

3. The secretariat of the Committee was comprised of members of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC). The Secretary-General's High Representative for Disarmament Affairs was represented by Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, Chief of the Regional Disarmament Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

4. The following United Nations entities took part in the proceedings: the United Nations Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (UNCHRD-CA), the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA), the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

5. The following entity participated as an observer: the secretariat of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

6. The opening ceremony featured:

- An opening statement by His Excellency Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chad;
- A message from the Secretary-General of ECCAS, read out by His Excellency Mr. Antonio Egidio de Sousa Santos, Deputy Secretary General in charge of the Department for Human Integration, Peace, Security and Stability;
- A message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, read out by His Excellency Mr. Victor Angelo, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Central African Republic and Chad.

7. The closing statement was delivered on 12 November 2009 by His Excellency Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chad.

B. Summary of proceedings

I. Election of the Bureau

8. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chad, was elected Chairman of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa by acclamation.

9. The Committee also elected the following countries as members of the Bureau:

- First Vice-Chairman: Central African Republic

- Second Vice-Chairman: Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Rapporteur: Republic of Equatorial Guinea

II. Adoption of the agenda

10. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of the Bureau;
2. Adoption of the agenda of the twenty-ninth ministerial meeting;
3. Report of the outgoing Bureau, read by its Chairman;
4. Review of the geopolitical and security situation;
5. Implementation of the Sao Tome Initiative: Review of the draft legal instrument on control of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa and its implementation;
6. Promotion of disarmament and arms limitation programmes in Central Africa:
   - Implementation of the Brazzaville Programme of priority activities (Proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and disarmament of the civilian population);
   - Briefing by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs;
7. Promoting peace and combating crime in Central Africa:
   - Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and implementation of the Yaoundé Agreement of 6 May 2009;
   - Women, peace and security: implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and other relevant resolutions: 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009);
8. Review of the financial situation of the Committee:
   - Implementation of the Libreville Declaration by the member States;
   - Briefing by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs;
9. Report by the ECCAS secretariat on the institutional evolution of the subregional peace and security structures and mechanisms, including status of ratification of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX) protocol, non-aggression and mutual assistance pacts, and the Central African multinational force (FOMAC);
10. Report of the United Nations Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa;
11. Follow-up of the Committee's decisions and recommendations;
12. Date and place of the next meeting;
13. Other matters;
14. Adoption of the report of the twenty-ninth ministerial meeting.

III. Report of the outgoing Bureau, read by its Chairman

11. The Committee took note of the report of the outgoing Bureau read by its Chairman. It commended the dynamism with which the Chairman and members of the Bureau had performed their duties and, in particular, their contribution to the adoption of the resolution on the activities of the Committee and to the preparation and organization of the twenty-ninth ministerial meeting, in close cooperation with the secretariat and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

IV. Review of the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa

12. The document prepared by the ECCAS secretariat on the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa served as the basis for the exchange of views by member States.

13. The Committee expressed appreciation to the ECCAS secretariat for the quality of the document.

14. Consideration of the geopolitical and security situation in the subregion focused on three main areas: political and institutional developments, internal and cross-border security, and issues related to governance, the humanitarian situation and human rights.

15. During the discussions, it emerged that, since the Committee's last meeting, there had been sharply contrasting developments in the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa. On the one hand, there had been significant progress in the consolidation of democratic processes and the smooth functioning of institutions. On the other hand, the subregion had been confronted with a number of situations of concern in the area of security.

16. At the political and institutional levels, the period under review had been characterized by stability and the conduct of elections in Gabon and the Republic of the Congo, as well as preparations for elections that were to take place in Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe.

17. At the level of internal and cross-border security, although the climate of calm that currently prevails in some conflict zones is welcome, it should be noted that Central Africa has also experienced serious threats to peace and security.

18. At the level of governance, the humanitarian situation and the human rights situation, it must be recognized that these three areas are closely connected to the issue of security in the world in general and in Central Africa in particular. Nevertheless, the review of the period under consideration allows for an assessment of efforts made by member States in that area.

19. It should be noted that virtually all Central African States have adopted legal and institutional mechanisms to regulate such matters (national good governance programmes, legislative provisions protecting and supporting refugees, legislative and administrative provisions protecting minorities, human rights committees and commissions and increased penalties for trafficking in and exploitation of children).

20. Despite significant efforts by the competent authorities, problems persist in certain places.

21. The Committee made the following country-by-country assessments of the situation.

- **Republic of Angola**

22. At the political level, the democratic process is continuing normally. After the legislative elections held in 2008, the new National Assembly formed as a result of this electoral process instructed its Constitutional Commission to draft a new Constitution based on proposals from the five political parties represented in Parliament. On the basis of these proposals, the Constitutional Commission submitted three draft versions which, after consultations with all stakeholders in Angola's political life, will finally lead to the drafting of a single Constitution for Angola.

23. Since 2006, the Angolan province of Cabinda has been in a special political situation, an outcome of the national peace and reconciliation process conducted in implementation of the peace agreement between the Government and the Cabinda Forum for Dialogue. The province currently has a special status within Angola's legal and administrative structure.

24. Angola is currently experiencing periods of real peace; the demining efforts under way throughout the country as part of the civilian disarmament process are helping to consolidate peace and national reconciliation.

25. Moreover, there are no cross-border conflicts between Angola and its neighbours. Concerns that have arisen recently regarding the repatriation of nationals of three countries who have questionable migrant status are being addressed through conventional channels under the existing bilateral cooperation mechanisms between Angola and its immediate neighbours, including the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

- **Republic of Burundi**

26. Since the last meeting, in Libreville, the Republic of Burundi has continued to make significant efforts towards the complete and definitive normalization of its political, institutional and security situation. On the political front, the Committee welcomed the establishment of the independent national electoral commission and the appointment of its members after consensus was reached between the various political parties represented in the National Assembly. It also welcomed the disbanding of the commission in the provinces as well as the vote on and promulgation of the law amending the electoral code. In addition, the Committee embraced the consolidation of the national reconstruction process and, in particular, the return of thousands of refugees from Tanzania.

27. The Committee also commended the significant efforts made by the Government to enforce the general ceasefire agreement, improve governance and prepare for the elections to be held in 2010. With regard to diplomacy, the Committee welcomed the normalization of diplomatic relations under way between Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo through exchanges of diplomats between the two countries.

28. In terms of security, the common borders with the Democratic Republic of the Congo are increasingly secure, despite continuing actions by hostile forces operating in those areas. The Committee welcomed the courageous decisions taken

by the Government, particularly in regard to the launch of a civilian disarmament campaign by the President of Burundi on 16 October 2009.

29. This campaign has achieved substantial results through the voluntary surrender of weapons by civilians in exchange for retraining tools such as agricultural equipment.

30. The Committee also welcomed the cantonment of nearly 3,500 rebel ex-combatants and their integration into the regular defence and security forces, the integration of political leaders from the former rebel movement into State institutions and the initial results of the investigation into the murder of the vice president of the national monitoring agency to combat corruption and economic malfeasance.

31. Nonetheless, the Committee acknowledged that the continuing illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons is contributing to the deterioration of security in Burundi.

- **Republic of Cameroon**

32. Since the last ministerial meeting, held in Libreville in May 2009, the overall situation in the Republic of Cameroon has been one of peace and stability.

33. The political situation has been primarily dominated by two significant developments: on the one hand, the body responsible for organizing and supervising elections in Cameroon (ELECAM) has begun its work, and its decentralized structures have been established, and, on the other hand, a new Prime Minister, Mr. Philemon Yang, has been appointed. That appointment has been perceived as reflecting the desire on the part of the President of the Republic to inject new dynamism into the reform programme, in the context of the broad ambitions which now exist in the country.

34. In terms of domestic and border security, the Committee was gratified that peace and security in Cameroon have been maintained or even consolidated. It welcomed the decision of the Government to put an end to the activity of security firms operating illegally. Nonetheless, the Committee expressed concern with regard to certain continuing threats such as prison escapes, break-ins at some public buildings, abuses by road blockers in the northern part of the country, cross-border criminal acts and acts of maritime piracy.

35. With regard to governance and the humanitarian situation, the Committee welcomed the significant improvements in the human rights situation in Cameroon, particularly in terms of the publicizing of the new code of criminal procedure and human rights education in schools. It also welcomed the campaign to combat corruption and improve political morality.

- **Central African Republic**

36. The overall political situation in the Central African Republic is largely dominated by preparations for the 2010 elections on the basis of recommendations resulting from the inclusive political dialogue held in December 2008. In that context, the Committee commended the adoption of a new electoral code as well as the establishment of an independent electoral commission with the effective participation of the entire opposition, including political parties and armed movements. The

Committee also commended the facilities provided by the Government to certain political opposition leaders who have already returned to the country.

37. With regard to domestic and cross-border security, the weakness or lack of competent State services in certain provinces and the activity of political and military movements, including the presence of the Lord's Resistance Army in the south-eastern part of the country, are making the security of the population precarious. In that context, the Committee expressed concern about the situation of the Central African refugees in southern Chad, the large numbers of internally displaced persons and the refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo who are in the south-eastern part of the Central African Republic, all of whom are fleeing the atrocities committed against them by the Lord's Resistance Army. The problems posed by the atrocities committed against the population have a regional dimension and affect several countries, including the Central African Republic, which has no shared border with the country of origin of that armed movement, i.e., Uganda. In that context, joint operations are being carried out by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic and Uganda to combat the Lord's Resistance Army.

38. Nonetheless, the Committee welcomed the efforts made as part of the campaign to raise awareness about disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and other initiatives relevant to security sector reform, especially the official launch of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process on 13 August 2009. It also welcomed the signing on 5 November 2009 at Bangui of a technical agreement between the Government, ECCAS, political and military movements and the steering committee for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. This agreement should facilitate the rapid deployment of ECCAS military observers in December 2009. The Central African Republic is awaiting these military observers so that the counting, consolidation and disarmament of armed movements can take place, including in connection with future elections which should take place in optimal conditions of peace and security. In addition, on 29 October 2009, a sectoral round table was held in Bangui in order to mobilize the resources needed to effectively implement security sector reform. In that context, the Committee welcomed the adoption of a new criminal code providing for punishment for war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes of genocide.

- **Republic of the Congo**

39. During the period under review, the main development in Congolese political life was the organization of the presidential election of 12 July 2009, which was described by African Union and ECCAS observers as "transparent and regular". In that context, the Committee congratulated the President and welcomed the formation of a new Government on 15 September 2009.

40. With regard to security, the Committee was gratified that the Government has continued to maintain order, peace and security throughout the national territory. In that context, it expressed satisfaction concerning the launch of the operation to recover at least 15,000 weapons from ex-combatants from the Pool region, with 100,000 CFA francs paid per weapon surrendered. In the area of governance, a national anti-corruption plan has been adopted and launched.

41. At the humanitarian level, the situation in the northern part of the Congo has deteriorated in the aftermath of the forced displacement of large numbers of people from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Equateur region) who have settled in

the district of Dongou. From 9,000 displaced persons in mid-October 2009, the number has increased to some 25,000. In cooperation with its partners, the Congo is making efforts to address this influx of displaced persons, which is raising concerns in terms of taking responsibility for them and the potential tensions that could cause among the local people. The Committee expressed concern about that situation and took note of the desire of the Congo to manage it with respect for the rights of displaced persons pending their return to their country of origin.

- **Democratic Republic of the Congo**

42. During the period under review, there were significant improvements in the general situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo following efforts by the relevant national authorities. At the political level, the progress made by the Congolese Government in the area of good governance, and Operation Zero Tolerance, promoted by the Chief of State His Excellency Mr. Joseph Kabila Kabange, are contributing to improved leadership in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and have been commended by the United Nations and the country's other development partners. The same has been true of the efforts made at the diplomatic level through the improvement of relations with Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, reflected in the appointment and accreditation of ambassadors as well as the opening of diplomatic missions and the revitalization of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries.

43. As for the problem of migration between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola, the Committee was pleased that the two countries have achieved an agreed solution through the establishment of a joint security and defence committee.

44. With regard to security, the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has improved significantly as a result of the KIMIA II operation in North and South Kivu. This operation was conducted by the regular Congolese forces with the support of MONUC, and achieved the following outcomes:

- 1,000 combatants from the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda were neutralized;
- More than 1,000 combatants were repatriated to Rwanda;
- More than 10,000 dependent family members were repatriated to Rwanda by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR);
- A Rwandan genocidist was arrested and handed over to MONUC and was transferred to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania.

45. At the humanitarian level, the situation deteriorated during the last quarter of 2009, according to the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The following information was provided:

- There are 1,200,000 internally displaced persons in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and North and South Kivu;
- 900,000 people have left their homes;
- 720,000 people have been displaced in Orientale province, following atrocities and killings committed by the Lord's Resistance Army;

- There are 25,000 internally displaced persons in the northern part of the country (Equateur) near the Republic of the Congo.

46. At the humanitarian and human rights level, significant progress has also been made through the release of prisoners and implementation of the "equality of justice" operation, which has led to better oversight of all detention facilities.

- **Gabonese Republic**

47. The Committee welcomed the overall situation of peace and security prevailing in the Gabonese Republic. It solemnly expressed its sympathy, solidarity and sincere condolences to the President of the Republic, the Government and all the people of Gabon following the tragic death of the Head of State of Gabon on 8 June 2009.

48. On the political front, the Committee was gratified that the presidential elections of 30 August 2009 had gone smoothly and congratulated the President of the Gabonese Republic, His Excellency Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, upon his election.

49. It encouraged the new Government to continue the implementation of measures in the context of its policy of emergence and good governance, particularly in relation to reducing State spending. With regard to domestic security, the Committee noted that Gabon remains stable despite some post-election violence, which occurred mainly in the city of Port-Gentil.

50. With regard to security in the subregion, on the initiative of His Excellency Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, the President and Head of State of the Gabonese Republic, their Excellencies Mr. Idriss Deby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad, Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of Congo and Mr. François Bozizé, President of the Central African Republic, met from 4 to 6 November 2009 in Libreville, to consider issues of common concern.

51. In the area of human rights, the Committee welcomed the efforts of the public authorities to promote freedom of expression and of the press.

- **Republic of Equatorial Guinea**

52. During the period under review, the Government's decision to hold the presidential election on 29 November 2009 was the main political development. With regard to domestic and cross-border security, the Committee was gratified by the stability and smooth functioning of the security services of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. It was also pleased with efforts under way to strengthen cooperation between Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea, particularly on issues of migration and delimitation of the maritime boundaries between the two countries.

53. The Committee also expressed satisfaction with regard to the participation of Equatorial Guinea in the common security arrangements for zone D of the Gulf of Guinea. In terms of governance and respect for human rights, the Committee encouraged the Guinean authorities to continue the efforts already undertaken to guarantee civil rights and liberties. In that regard, it welcomed the recent release by the Guinean authorities of Mr. Rodrigo Angue Nguema, a correspondent for Agence France-Presse and Radio France Internationale, who had been accused by some citizens of disseminating false information about them.

54. The Committee also welcomed the release on 2 November 2009 by His Excellency Mr. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of

Equatorial Guinea, of 41 prisoners, including some mercenaries arrested in the aftermath of the failed coup attempt of March 2004.

- **Republic of Rwanda**

55. During the period under review, the general situation in the Republic of Rwanda was characterized by stability and the smooth functioning of institutions in a general context which was still affected by the legacy and consequences of the 1994 genocide. On the political front, Rwanda continues to consolidate its democracy. It is in that spirit that the 2010 presidential elections are being prepared. On the diplomatic front, Rwanda appears to be a key actor in the stabilization of the Great Lakes region and an essential actor in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, not to mention its major role in the Darfur crisis, where it is deploying a large contingent within the framework of the African Union peacekeeping force.

56. The Committee was pleased by the clear improvement in diplomatic relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, marked in particular by the accreditation of ambassadors, followed by the opening of the diplomatic mission of Rwanda in Kinshasa and of the diplomatic mission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Kigali.

57. In terms of domestic security, public order and security are being effectively maintained. From the standpoint of cross-border security, the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, in close collaboration with the Democratic Republic of the Congo and MONUC, is continuing to make efforts to eliminate the threat which may be represented by members of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda based in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

58. In the areas of governance and human rights, the authorities have made significant efforts, especially in enforcing the law abolishing the death penalty which was adopted in 2007.

- **Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe**

59. Since the Committee's twenty-eighth ministerial meeting, the situation in the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe has been characterized primarily on the political front by increasing tranquillity, stability and the smooth functioning of institutions. The Committee took note of the preparations by the Government for the 2010 municipal and legislative elections, as well as the 2011 presidential elections, despite continuing financial problems.

60. In terms of domestic and cross-border security, the situation has been stable since the most recent attempt to destabilize public and social order, which was thwarted by the authorities of Sao Tome and Principe. With regard to the phenomenon of maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, the Committee expressed great concern about the presence of unidentified boats in the territorial waters of Sao Tome and Principe.

61. In the area of justice and human rights, the new criminal legislation adopted by the Parliament was vetoed by the President of the Republic, who sent back the text for a second reading in order to amend the article on prison terms, which were considered to be excessively long. In this regard, the Committee welcomed the efforts made by the Government to modernize the judicial system, in particular by

training members of the judiciary police, promoting gender balance and enforcing legislation to suppress domestic violence.

62. On the socio-economic front, the Committee encouraged the Government to continue the policy of investing in the construction and modernization of public infrastructure, in particular agro-industrial facilities, a deep water port, expansion of Sao Tome airport and the upgrading of telecommunications systems through the acquisition of underwater cables. The Committee also welcomed the efforts made by the Government of Sao Tome and Principe to implement projects in the area of rural development and the water and energy sectors.

- **Republic of Chad**

63. In Chad, there has been a clear-cut easing of tension in the overall political situation, particularly as a result of the participation of some opposition political parties in the broad-based Government. With respect to the national reconciliation process, the Committee welcomed the policy of engagement being maintained by President Idriss Deby Itno. That policy is illustrated by the return from exile of former President Goukouni Wedeye and other Chadian political figures and the signing of a peace agreement between the Government and the National Movement, a coalition of three rebel movements led by Mr. Ahmat Hassaballah Soubiane, a former minister and former ambassador of Chad to Washington. In the context of the improved political climate and in implementation of the agreement of 13 August 2007, a new independent national electoral commission has been established and is in operation. The membership of this joint commission takes into account all national sensitivities. It is chaired by a professional drawn from civil society who was appointed by consensus. The purpose of the independent national electoral commission is to prepare for the forthcoming elections to be held in 2010-2011 on the basis of a population census carried out recently by the competent authorities.

64. At the diplomatic level, Chad is showing encouraging signs of moving towards an atmosphere of calm in its relations with the Sudan, including through the signature of several agreements, the most recent of which was signed in May 2009. Relations between the two countries have been very tense since the outbreak of the Darfur crisis. In this context, the Head of State of Chad recently received a large Sudanese delegation, which worked with a Chadian commission on issues of common concern. With respect to security, the Committee welcomed the cooperation between the national authorities and MINURCAT, which will reach its full strength in early 2010. It was pleased with the security that the United Nations force provides to the many refugees in Chadian territory. The Committee also welcomed Chad's willingness to continue hosting 400,000 Sudanese and Central African refugees in its territory. It was pleased that some 5,000 ex-combatants had realigned themselves with the Government as a result of operations for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed movements. Chad has also demobilized several child soldiers who are now in transit centres with a view to their social reintegration.

65. The Committee also welcomed the awareness-raising campaign to stop the recruitment of child soldiers and children associated with armed groups, which was launched by the Government of Chad with the support of friendly countries and development partners such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

66. In addition, the Committee condemned the armed attacks orchestrated by bandits, roadblockers and other criminals against the State, the people of Chad and humanitarian workers.

V. Implementation of the Sao Tome Initiative: Review of the draft legal instrument on control of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa and its implementation

67. The Committee carried out a first reading of the draft legal instrument on the control, in Central Africa, of small arms and light weapons, their ammunition and all equipment that might be used in their manufacture (UNSAC/2009/29/WP.1) and took note of the draft implementation plan for this legal instrument (UNSAC/2009/29/WP.2), both of which were prepared by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC), as the secretariat of the Committee, at the request of the twenty-eighth ministerial meeting. The Committee congratulated the secretariat on the quality of the documents it had produced and commended the volume of research and work that had been done. The Committee also reiterated its gratitude to the Government of Austria for its support, and in particular its financial support, for the Committee's work.

68. The Committee recommended that each member State should review the draft legal instrument at the national level with the participation of the various authorities. It requested the member States to make written recommendations once the consultations had been completed and to transmit them to the secretariat no later than 31 January 2010.

69. The Committee decided to devote its thirtieth ministerial meeting to the consideration of the draft legal instrument, the text of which should be sent to member States one month before the thirtieth ministerial meeting. If possible, this version of the draft legal instrument should be accompanied by a draft implementation plan that had been revised on the basis of comments from member States.

VI. Promotion of disarmament and arms limitation programmes in Central Africa

- **Implementation of the Brazzaville Programme of priority activities (Proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and disarmament of the civilian population)**

70. The Committee noted with interest the briefings by some member States on the problem of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in their territories. It also took note of the measures taken by the competent national authorities to solve the problem in conformity with the relevant provisions of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Brazzaville Programme of priority activities of 2003.

71. In this context, the Committee noted with interest the briefing by the representative of the Republic of Angola. Since the previous meeting of the Committee, the Angolan Government, deeming the collection of arms from the civilian population to be crucial to ensure peace, had continued a programme for

civilian disarmament in four stages: (a) awareness-raising; (b) voluntary arms collection; (c) forced arms collection; and (d) assessment of the activities carried out.

72. During the stage of forced collection of illegally owned weapons, the authorities conducted investigations that led to the confiscation of some 28,575 weapons. Overall, Angola collected 72,295 weapons of various types, 258,072 rounds of ammunition, 39,319 magazines and some 116,507 explosives. Forty-nine concealed arms storage depots were also discovered.

73. In addition, Angola has updated its legislation on the carrying of weapons and the activities of private security companies, including a definition of the type of weapons they must use. Within the framework of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Angola is also working on exchanges of information and experience and on the implementation of subregional standards on the marking of weapons, including regulations on transfers to prevent unauthorized individuals from gaining access to weapons. In this context, the Committee welcomed all of the initiatives taken by the Republic of Angola, which had significantly improved the sense of security among the people.

74. The Committee commended the existence in the Republic of Burundi, since 29 April 2006, of a national commission on civilian disarmament and combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Civilian disarmament is a challenge for the Burundian Government in anticipation of the 2010 elections. In that context, the Committee regretted the slowdown in the commission's activities owing to delays in the implementation of the September 2006 ceasefire agreement. Nevertheless, the Committee welcomed the collection of nearly 70,000 light weapons by the Burundian authorities in three years, out of an estimated 100,000 weapons owned by civilians.

75. Furthermore, with the assistance of the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSA) and the non-governmental organization Mines Advisory Group, Burundi began the process of marking weapons belonging to the defence and security forces and destroying obsolete weapons and ammunition. Burundi also adopted a law on small arms and light weapons on 28 August 2009. A national plan of action for the period 2009 to 2013 on the control and management of small arms and light weapons and on civilian disarmament is also being adopted.

76. The Committee noted that a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme is being implemented in the Central African Republic on the basis of recommendations from the inclusive political dialogue. The programme includes, inter alia:

- The actual launching of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations on 13 August 2009 with the induction of nearly 50 per cent of ex-combatants into the Central African national army;
- The implementation of an awareness-raising and reconciliation campaign in the northern areas with the deployment of the first joint patrol by government forces and ex-rebels;
- The return of the main military leaders and a pre-cantonment exercise scheduled for 20 November 2009.

77. In that regard, the Committee took note of the technical agreement concluded on 5 November 2009 between ECCAS, the steering committee for the disarmament,

demobilization and reintegration programme in the Central African Republic, the Government of the Central African Republic and political and military movements on the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders during the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, and of the holding of a round table on the effective implementation of security sector reform with the support of the Central African Republic's bilateral and multilateral partners. The Committee also took note of the positive results of the joint mission to the Central African Republic by the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union and the International Organization of la Francophonie. The purpose of the mission was to assess the implementation of the recommendations of the inclusive political dialogue, particularly with respect to defence and security issues.

78. Moreover, the Committee noted that in the Republic of the Congo, nearly 360 firearms were collected from January to September 2009 in six departments (Brazzaville, Bouenza, Lékoumou, Cuvette, Niari and Pool). The project on disarmament through weapons purchase was conducted in two stages: the first took place from 2 February to 1 March 2009 and the second from 16 to 26 June 2009. In total, by the end of these two stages:

- 3,854 firearms (all types) had been collected;
- 696 knives had been collected;
- 181,797 pieces of ammunition and explosive devices (all types) had also been collected;
- 13,999 militia members had been identified for reintegration as individuals who had relinquished their weapons.

79. In addition, the Committee noted with satisfaction that the Republic of the Congo is implementing the Community Arms Collection for Development programme. Through this programme, over 5,000 ex-combatants, including 500 child soldiers, have been demobilized in the Pool department and 3,000 weapons have been collected and destroyed by the competent services of the Congolese army. The Congolese Government also destroyed 4,000 mines on 3 April 2009 in connection with Mine Awareness Day.

80. Furthermore, the Committee took note of the information conveyed by the delegation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on disarmament and arms control initiatives. In this context, the Committee welcomed the legal and practical measures taken by the Congolese authorities.

81. At the administrative level, certain relevant instruments have been adopted, including a resolution appointing the permanent secretary of the national commission on control of small arms and light weapons and reduction of armed violence. At the legislative level, a draft law on small arms and light weapons has been submitted to the National Assembly for adoption, after which it will be promulgated by the Head of State.

82. At the practical and operational level, the Democratic Republic of the Congo destroyed some 97,661 small arms and light weapons; 472 tons of ammunition and explosives of various calibres under 100 mm; 3,079 landmines and 620,525 non-explosive devices. In addition, 3,004 zones suspected of contamination were confirmed, while 4,351,091 m^2 of land were demined and 260 kilometres of roads were cleared. Also of note were the organization of some 7,022 training sessions on

the risks from small arms and light weapons, mines and explosive remnants of war, and the provision of multifaceted assistance to some 2,163 landmine victims.

83. Lastly, the Committee took note of the information provided by the Republic of Chad on a resurgence in the proliferation of unlawful small arms and light weapons due to the incursion from the Sudan. It expressed satisfaction with the establishment, by decree No. 1701/PR/PM/2008 of 23 December 2008, of the national commission on disarmament. In its first six months of existence, this commission, whose mandate was renewed on 29 June 2009, collected just over 10,000 small arms and light weapons.

84. The Committee also welcomed the other relevant measures taken by the Chadian authorities, including civilian disarmament operations, a crackdown on thugs, the adoption of administrative measures to curb the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and the implementation of the mine-clearance programme by the country's High Commission for mine clearance.

- **Briefing by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs**

85. The Committee considered that the briefings by the representative of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Secretary of the Committee on disarmament and non-proliferation related developments at the international level and in Africa were highly useful and would assist member States not only in planning their participation in various conferences but also in preparing their input.

86. With a particularly full slate of activities scheduled for the forthcoming years, the member States took note of a number of meetings that would be particularly significant for them and in which they could participate in order to have their voices heard and ensure that the views and characteristics of the subregion were taken into account.

87. The Committee welcomed the holding in New York, on 24 September 2009, of the Security Council summit on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, chaired by His Excellency Mr. Barack Obama, President of the United States of America. At that meeting, the Security Council adopted resolution 1887 (2009) calling upon the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to comply fully with all their obligations and fulfil their commitments under the Treaty. On the same day, the United States of America, represented by Her Excellency Ms. Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State, also returned, after a 10-year absence, to the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

88. The Committee expressed interest in the regional and subregional activities conducted by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to support the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). It noted, in particular, the regional workshop for African States and regional organizations, such as ECCAS, to be held in Egypt from 7 to 10 December 2009.

89. In that respect, the Committee decided to convey a request to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) for the organization of a workshop on the implementation of the resolution by the Committee's 11 member States.

90. In connection with the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, to be held in June

2010 in New York, the Committee requested the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to organize a two-day preparatory meeting to be held immediately prior to the opening of the Committee's thirtieth ministerial meeting, and to invite Ambassador Pablo Macedo of Mexico, the Chairman-elect of the Biennial Meeting.

91. In order to derive the greatest benefit from the two-day meeting, States will pay particular attention to the membership of their delegations to the thirtieth ministerial meeting, which should include experts who will participate in the Biennial Meeting.

92. Regarding the drafting and negotiation of an arms trade treaty, an international conference will be organized in 2012. The open-ended working group, which will hold meetings on that subject in New York in 2010 and 2011, will act as a preparatory committee for the 2012 drafting conference.

93. With respect to the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC) informed the Committee that, as it had done for West African States, it intended to organize, with the appropriate partners, a workshop for Central African authorities on good practices in marking, record-keeping and tracing weapons and on establishing a monitoring system to better control the flow of weapons in the subregion.

94. The Committee was pleased to see that several of its member States had already signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions. It commended the Republic of Burundi, which had already signed and ratified that important document, which to date had received 25 of the 30 ratifications required for its entry into force.

95. The Committee also expressed satisfaction with the publication of the first report of the United Nations Secretary-General on the link between armed violence and development (A/64/228), in which he analyses various aspects of the relationship between armed violence and development.

96. With respect to the regulation of arms brokering, the Committee was interested in the project developed by UNREC on the regulation of legal brokering in States in East Africa and the Horn of Africa, with financial support from the Government of Austria.

97. In that context, UNREC has entered into a strategic partnership with the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States. To date, a list of brokers in the targeted countries has been drawn up and UNREC is in the process of establishing an electronic directory of brokers using software developed for that purpose. The software can also be used to record all procedures relating to applications for and issuance of brokers' licences. There are plans to extend the project to other African subregions, including Central Africa.

98. Furthermore, the Committee welcomed the entry into force on 15 July 2009 of the Pelindaba Treaty making Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone, thanks to the ratification of the treaty by the Republic of Burundi. The Pelindaba Treaty was opened for signature on 11 April 1996 and required 28 ratifications to enter into force. The Committee noted with satisfaction that all its member States have signed the Treaty. It encouraged those States that have not yet done so to ratify the Treaty.

99. The Committee also noted with great interest the publication of a communiqué of the African Union Peace and Security Council formalizing its close cooperation

with UNREC, whereby it confers upon UNREC responsibilities in the area of African strategy on small arms and light weapons and a role in the implementation of the Pelindaba Treaty.

VII. Promoting peace and combating crime in Central Africa

- **Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and implementation of the Yaoundé Agreement of 6 May 2009**

100. The Committee took note of information provided by the delegation of Cameroon regarding the resurgence of acts of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. The Committee expressed concerned about the situation, which represents a threat to the peace and stability of the subregion, and strongly condemned these criminal acts.

101. In addition, the Committee asked to be kept informed of the progress achieved in implementing the Yaoundé Agreement of 6 May 2009 regarding the securing of the vital maritime interests of the ECCAS States and zone D of the Gulf of Guinea, concluded between ECCAS and the Republic of Cameroon, the Gabonese Republic, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea and the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe.

102. Within this context, the Committee welcomed the establishment of the executive secretariat of the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea, chaired by Mr. Miguel Trovoada, former President of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe. It also welcomed the launching of the first joint patrols since the signing, under the auspices of ECCAS, of the first maritime security plan (SECMAR) and the launching of the multinational coordination centre in Douala.

103. The Committee also expressed satisfaction with the decision taken by the 14th ordinary session of the Heads of State and Government of ECCAS, held in Kinshasa on 23 and 24 October 2009, to establish as soon as possible the Centre régional de sécurisation maritime de l'Afrique centrale (CRESMAC) in Pointe-Noire, Republic of the Congo.

104. In addition, the Committee welcomed the decision of the Heads of State and Government of ECCAS to establish a mechanism for financing the Gulf of Guinea security strategy and to hold an international maritime conference in the near future. It appealed to the international community, including donors, to assist the countries of the Gulf of Guinea with the securing of their maritime area.

105. The Committee recommended that a subregional conference on maritime piracy in Central Africa should be organized, bringing together all the States members of the Committee, donors and other relevant international actors.

106. It also asked the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to bring to its attention any similar initiative undertaken in other regions, together with all relevant information.

- **Women, peace and security: implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and other relevant resolutions: 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009)**

107. The member States commended the presidency on having taken the initiative of adding to the agenda of the twenty-ninth ministerial meeting an item relating to women's role in and contribution to peace and security.

108. It was deemed that the time had come for the Committee to discuss and adopt concrete measures for implementation, as the international community prepared to take part in the Security Council summit meeting of October 2010 commemorating the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

109. The above-mentioned resolutions, which are complementary in nature, are essential tools for the prevention and resolution of conflicts and for peacebuilding and reconstruction. In these resolutions, the Security Council reaffirms, inter alia, the importance of the following elements:

- Increasing the representation of women at all decision-making levels in the areas of conflict prevention, management and resolution;
- Enhancing the participation, role and contributions of women in peacekeeping operations and post-conflict processes;
- Increasing the involvement of women in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements, including by the adoption of measures supporting peace initiatives undertaken by local women's groups;
- According special protection to women and refugee populations during conflicts and providing increased assistance to women who actively promote peace;
- Ending impunity for sexual crimes;
- Adopting measures aimed at preventing and punishing acts of sexual violence, specifically those used as a weapon of war to humiliate, dominate, intimidate, disperse or forcibly relocate civilian members of a community or an ethnic group;
- Incorporating a gender perspective in national training programmes for defence and security forces.

110. The Committee recognized the importance of the role played by women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding. It reaffirmed that if the effects of armed conflicts on women were better understood, if there were effective institutional arrangements to ensure their protection and if women participated fully in peace processes, the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security would be facilitated.

111. The Committee expressed regret that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons. It strongly condemned the frequent targeting of women by combatants and armed elements and the infliction on them of all manner of violence, including sexual violence such as rape and genital mutilation.

112. The Committee urged the member States to implement all the relevant Security Council resolutions concerning the relationship between women, peace and armed conflicts. It encouraged donors to support member States in order to put an end to the phenomenon of violence against women.

113. In order to prepare for its participation in the Security Council summit meeting of October 2010, the Committee decided to continue discussing this issue and to take the following measures as soon as possible:

- The designation by each member State of a focal point on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) from among the ministries responsible for matters of

peace and security, including the ministries of foreign affairs, of the interior or of security, and of defence;

- The inclusion of women in the delegations of member States taking part in international and regional conferences on disarmament (concerning the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the biennial meeting on small arms and light weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, etc.);
- The inclusion of women in national commissions to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons;
- The reaffirmation of the commitment of member States to comply with and implement these four Security Council resolutions and to submit the required annual reports.

114. Lastly, the Committee recommended that the States of the subregion should step up their efforts to combat violence against women and girls and take the measures needed to restore the role of women as agents of peace. The Committee decided to include an item in the agenda of each of its meetings on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and other relevant resolutions: 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009).

VIII. Review of the financial situation of the Committee

- **Implementation of the Libreville Declaration by the member States**

115. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the Chairman had sent an information note to all the member States on the implementation of the Libreville Declaration.

116. The Committee thanked the Gabonese Republic and the Republic of the Congo for their commitment to pay US$ 10,000 each to the Committee's trust fund. The Committee also took note of the arrangements made by the other member States to make a contribution to the trust fund during their next budget year.

117. The member States pledged to make a minimum annual contribution of US$ 10,000 to the trust fund.

- **Briefing by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs**

118. The Committee took note with interest of the briefing by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs on the Committee's financial situation, and, in particular, the announcement that the Committee's trust fund was empty and on the verge of being closed for lack of funds. The consequences of the absence of voluntary contributions for the ability of the staff of the Office to provide support for the work of the Committee were also described. The Committee emphasized the need for all member States to make every effort to pay their contributions to the trust fund on a regular basis, in accordance with the Libreville Declaration. It also called upon other States Members of the United Nations and donors to make financial contributions to the trust fund.

119. The Committee decided to review its financial situation at the thirtieth ministerial meeting.

IX. Report by the ECCAS secretariat on the institutional evolution of the subregional peace and security structures and mechanisms, including ratification of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX) protocol, non-aggression and mutual assistance pacts, and the Central African multinational force (FOMAC)

120. The Committee took note of the briefing by the ECCAS secretariat on the development of its crisis prevention and crisis management instruments, the implementation of its security policies and the principal partnerships it is developing.

121. Concerning the development of crisis prevention and crisis management instruments, the Committee noted with satisfaction the decision taken by the fourteenth conference of Heads of State and Government of ECCAS to establish, within the framework of COPAX:

- A committee of ambassadors, which will improve communications between the ECCAS secretariat and the member States, particularly on matters relating to peace and security;
- A strategic analysis group within the ECCAS secretariat as the first level of the decision-making process in crisis management.

122. The Committee also commended the ongoing data collection and analysis work carried out by the Central African Early Warning Mechanism (MARAC), as well as the work being done to prepare for the Kwanza 2010 multinational, multidimensional exercise to be conducted in Angola in May 2010.

123. With regard to the implementation of security policies, the Committee welcomed the implementation and deployment of the COPAX mission in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX), as well as the endorsement of the ECCAS Border Programme by the fourteenth conference of Heads of State and Government. The Committee also commended the activities carried out by ECCAS in the area of security sector reform, combating human trafficking and promoting the free movement of persons.

124. In addition, the Committee took note of the support that ECCAS has provided to certain member States for electoral operations, including the observation of the presidential elections in the Gabonese Republic and in the Republic of the Congo. The Committee encouraged ECCAS to continue developing its strategic partnerships for peace and security with national, regional and international actors.

X. Report of the United Nations Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa

125. The Committee took note with interest of the progress report submitted by the United Nations Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa. It commended the way in which the Centre is achieving its objectives in the promotion and protection of human rights in the subregion. Within this context, the Committee welcomed the continuation of the gender training sessions provided by the Centre to national focal points for gender issues. It also expressed satisfaction with the capacity-building being provided to the armed and security forces,

particularly in the areas of law enforcement techniques and the administration of justice, based on respect for human rights.

126. The Committee encouraged the Centre to continue providing technical assistance to States, as well as to civil society organizations, including assistance in the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. The Committee also encouraged the Centre to continue providing the technical assistance needed by States for their participation in the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council, and follow-up on the implementation of the subsequent recommendations.

127. As regards the promotion of democracy, the Committee commended the mission for the monitoring of human rights carried out by the Centre during the presidential elections in Gabon. The Committee was also pleased by the Centre's organization of a subregional conference on the consolidation of democracy in Central Africa, held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, from 28 to 30 October 2009.

128. It encouraged the Centre to further publicize its fellowship programme so that public officials could benefit more fully from it.

129. The Committee took note of the Centre's organization of the second regional conference on transitional justice, from 17 to 19 November 2009 in Yaounde, Cameroon. The Committee also took note with interest of the Centre's participation in the forum on the development of a post-conflict rehabilitation, reconstruction and development programme in Central Africa, which will be held from 8 to 10 December 2009 in Bujumbura, Burundi. It reiterated its support for the Centre's activities and expressed satisfaction with the work carried out during the period in question.

XI. Follow-up of the Committee's decisions and recommendations

130. The Committee took note with interest of the transmission by its Chairman of the Code of Conduct for the Defence and Security Forces in Central Africa to the Secretary-General of ECCAS for approval by its competent bodies.

131. The Committee reiterated its recommendation for closer collaboration between its secretariat and the ECCAS secretariat, inter alia in furthering the process of developing the draft legal instrument on control of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa, and in helping States to carry out activities to increase awareness of and to disseminate the Code of Conduct among the defence and security forces in Central Africa.

132. The Committee decided that at each of its ministerial meetings it would consider an agenda item entitled "Follow-up of the Committee's decisions and recommendations".

XII. Date and place of the next meeting

133. The Committee decided to hold its thirtieth ministerial meeting in Bangui, Central African Republic, in 2010.

134. The Committee recommended that the Central African Republic and the secretariat should continue their consultations regarding the exact dates and that, in

the event of difficulties, the possibility of the Central African Republic trading places with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Second Vice-Chairman) should be explored.

XIII. Other matters

135. The Committee commended the participation in its work of peacekeeping missions and offices of the United Nations in Central Africa and recommended that an item concerning them should be added to the agendas of future ministerial meetings.

XIV. Adoption of the report of the twenty-ninth ministerial meeting

136. The Committee adopted the present report on 12 November 2009. It congratulated the secretariat for its professionalism and the quality of its work.

137. The Committee reiterated its gratitude to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the revitalization of its work, as well as for his contribution to peace and security in Central Africa.

C. Expression of thanks

138. The following expression of thanks was read out:

"We, the representatives of the States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, assembled for the twenty-ninth ministerial meeting, held from 9 to 13 November 2009 in N'Djamena, Republic of Chad;

"Extend our sincere condolences to His Excellency Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Gabonese Republic, and to the Government and people of the Gabonese Republic, following the sad loss of President El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba, the most senior member of the Heads of State of Central Africa;

"Reaffirm our commitment to the ideals of peace, security and stability that are so vital to our respective peoples and to the socio-economic development of our subregion;

"Commend the individual and collective efforts of our countries to achieve peace, security, stability and development;

"Also commend and encourage the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution and in peacebuilding in our subregion;

"Welcome the atmosphere of conviviality, brotherhood and mutual trust which has prevailed throughout our work; and

"Express our sincere thanks and deep gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Idriss Deby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad, and to the Government and people of Chad, for the warm welcome and fraternal hospitality we have received during our stay in Chad."

N'Djamena, 12 November 2009